

Abstract

The Water Quality of the Snake River in Southcentral Idaho

From American Falls To King Hill the water quality of the Snake River shoulders a great responsibility on a number of industries, both old and emerging. For every gallon of water that cross American Falls Dam and Milner Dam the use on that water has multiplied in recent years. Drought years in particular bring an added burden on maintenance of that water quality so that users are not unduly penalized because of low flow conditions.

The water quality of the Snake River has emerged into one of the most critical and important characteristics of the Snake River that affects and impacts a myriad of livelihoods and water user industry production throughout south central Idaho. It's no longer a question of "is it's clean?" It's now a question of "how clean is it?" Much work has been done in recent years to bring the level of water quality to a higher plain. The future will require this level and more as more and more dollars are spent to cleanup the river system so all can benefit from the use.

Biographical Sketch

Dr. Balthasar B. Buhidar, Ph.D. earned his doctorate in chemistry from the University of Texas in 1976 in the area of sulfur dioxide chemistry. As a consequence, he has two chemical patents for sulfur dioxide treatment of irrigation water for agricultural applications and wastewater treatment using sulfur dioxide. He also has a Ph.D. in musical theater (opera). He was born and raised in south Texas, but has lived in Idaho for the last 20 years. He has done field research in the impact of sulfur dioxide to a variety of soils and crops for reclamation from saline or alkali conditions. In his career he has served as an agricultural analytical chemist and has directed a variety of laboratories that cater to soil, crop, and water testing for fertility recommendations. As a consequence of his laboratory work, he has become very familiar with groundwater and surface water quality analysis under a variety of field regimes. Currently, he is regional manager for water quality protection for the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality for the Twin Falls regional office. He has worked for DEQ for over 8 years.

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